GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1357
ANSWERED ON:27.11.2002
LOBBYING FIRMS IN USA
TRILOCHAN KANUNGO

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether our Mission in the USA employs lobbying firms to project India`s interests and concerns;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the names of such firms;

(c) the role played by them during the last five years; and

(d) the role played by our U.S. Mission in enhancing Indian exports to America?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH)

(a) & (b) Yes. The Indian Mission in the United States employs the services of one lobbying firm, M/s Verner Liipfert.

(c) M/s Verner Liipfert`s services were hired in July 1998, at a time whenIndia-U.S. relations became strained due to India`s nuclear tests in May 1998. Since then, the firm has worked effectively with the Mission in the United States to normalise and strengthen India-U.S. relations, project India`s concerns and interests in the United States, broaden the support for India in the U.S. Congress and counter anti-India propaganda and initiatives from well-known quarters.

(d) The Indian Mission advises Indian exporters, supports export promotion activities and deals with regulatory aspects of trade in the United States.The Mission`s efforts have contributed to the sustained growth in exports of Indian goods and services to the United States. Merchandise exports grew from US $ 5.0 billion in 1995 to U.S. $ 9.7 billion in 2001.In the period January-July 2002, India recorded the second highest rate of growth in merchandise exports among the top 25 exporting countries to the United States.